

REMARKS

1. Claims 4-10 and 16-29 are pending in the application. All claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), in view of several combinations of U.S. Pat. No. 218,195 to Henry Rhyn ("Rhyn"), U.S. Pat. No. 766,145 to William Greer ("Greer"), and U.S. Pat. No. 2,543,824 to Beesley et al. ("Beesley"). Reconsideration by the Examiner in view of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

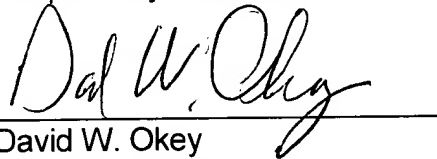
2. Claims 4, 16, 21, 24 and 29 have been amended to overcome the rejections. Support for the amendments is found at least in the claims as filed and in Figs. 1, 3, and 6 of the application. The amendments distinguish the claims from the prior art cited and are believed to be allowable. Claim 4 has been amended to recite that the upper portion of the lower jaw does not intersect the slide bar and is supported only by the lower jaw. This distinguishes Claim 4 from Greer, in which the lower jaw intersects the slide bar with both its upper and lower portions. The amendment also distinguishes Claim 4 from Beesley, in which the upper portion of the lower jaw does intersect the slide bar; in Rhyn, the lower jaw is not slidably mounted. In addition, the brake lever has been better described as having a portion that extends longitudinally, and substantially the same length as the lower portion of the lower jaw. This distinguishes the brake lever from Greer and Beesley, which depict a much-shorter lever or a lever that does not extend longitudinally. Rhyn does not have a brake lever.

Claim 16 has also been amended, with additional limitations that the first portion of the lower jaw is on only a first side of the slide bar extending toward the upper jaw, while the second portion is on first and second sides of the slide bar extending in an opposite direction toward the gripping portion. These limitations distinguish Claim 16 from Greer, in which the lower jaw has upper and lower portions on both sides of the side bar, and from Beesley in which the second portion is also on only one side of the slide bar and is not on the first and second sides of the slide bar. In Rhyn, the lower jaw is not slidably mounted. The brake lever limitation has also been amended in a manner similar to Claim 4, to distinguish the claim from the references.

Claim 21 has been amended in the steps pertaining to providing the object and adjusting a gap between jaws of the hand tool, and to make it clear that the jaws are used to grasp the object. The description of the hand tool in the "adjusting" step distinguishes the hand tool from the references in a manner similar to that of Claims 4 and 16. Claims 24 and 29 have been similarly amended, and are also believed to be allowable.

3. Applicants have amended the claims and respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and advance the application to allowance. Should the Examiner believe that contact with the undersigned will expedite the allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully asked to call the undersigned at 312-321-4711.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David W. Okey", is written over a horizontal line.

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